

Uzbekistan to supply six IL-78 tanker aircraft to India

NEW DELHI - Uzbekistan will train Indian pilots and technicians on Ilyushin IL-78 tanker aircraft it is supplying to the Indian air force.

The sale of six IL-78 aircraft will be completed during the visit of Indian air force Chief Marshal Shrinivaswaram Krishnaswamy's Sept. 4-7 visit to Uzbekistan.

An Indian defense ministry official told *The DAILY* that the first of the six aircraft should arrive in India by the end of the year. The training schedule of the pilots, and the delivery schedule of the aircraft, will be completed during Krishnaswamy's visit.

India signed a memorandum of understanding for the purchase of the aircraft in 1997. In December 2001, the Indian defense ministry signed a \$150 million contract with Uzbekistan's Chkalov aviation plant to build the aircraft. Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) of Bangalore will maintain the aircraft.

The Ilyushin IL-78 is an aerial refueling tanker aircraft. It can carry up to 35 tons of fuel and can refuel up to three aircraft simultaneously from three hose drum units, one from each wing and the third from the starboard side of the rear fuselage.

It will give India's Su-30MKIs, MiG-29SMTs, Mirage 2000s and Light Combat Aircraft unmatched range on the subcontinent, according to Indian officials.

"The air-to-air refueling capability will also help in conducting operations in low-level contingencies at exceptionally long ranges," said Pran Nath Kaul, a former Indian air force official.

- *Bulbul Singh (bulbul.singh@indiatimes.com)*



Lawmaker seeks new ways to boost aeronautics R&D funding

Rep. John Larson (D-Conn.) is looking for new ways to get Congress to double funding for aeronautics research and development at NASA and the FAA, now that one particularly attractive approach is no longer available this year.

Larson, whose district is home to engine maker Pratt & Whitney, had been eyeing the NASA authorization bill as a possible vehicle for his aeronautics proposal in 2002 because he sits on the House Science Committee, which has jurisdiction over NASA authorization legislation. But the committee recently delayed consideration of the NASA bill until early 2003, so it would have more time to study matters involving the International Space Station and other programs (*DAILY*, July 15).

However, if Larson does not succeed in getting his

proposal enacted by some other means this year, the NASA authorization bill remains a potential vehicle next year, as does an FAA authorization bill that the House Transportation aviation subcommittee is expected to consider in early 2003, according to Larson spokesman Michael Kirk.

"Larson will look for every available opportunity to enact the provisions of [his] legislation for the remainder of this year, and into next year" if necessary, Kirk said.

Larson's proposal, which he introduced as a bill in May, has more than 40 co-sponsors and enjoys the support of the Aerospace Industries Association. But it can be difficult to enact a bill that addresses only one issue, which is why Larson has been looking to attach his measure to broader legislation.

Under his proposal, which aims to make the U.S. aerospace industry more competitive internationally, aeronautics R&D funding would rise to \$1.15 billion at NASA and to \$550 million at the FAA by 2007, double the current levels (*DAILY*, May 1, May 6).

- *Marc Selinger (marc_selinger@AviationNow.com)*

Two companies developing security technology for JBI program

The Air Force has awarded two contracts, worth a total of nearly \$10 million, for research to develop and validate security technology for its Joint Battlespace Infosphere (JBI) program.

The Boeing Co. and BBNT Solutions of Cambridge, Mass., each got one-year contracts of about \$4.9 million from the Information Directorate of the Air Force Research Laboratory, Rome, N.Y.

The contracts are for a program called Organically Assured and Survivable Information Systems (OASIS) Demonstration-Validation, sponsored by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

"Researchers for both firms will be attempting to take technology developed under the OASIS program and apply it toward JBI applications," Patrick M. Hurley, program manager in the Information Grid Division of AFRL's Information Directorate, said in an Air Force statement. "At the conclusion of the one-year contract period, one of the companies will be selected for a follow-on contract valued at approximately \$8.5 million."

JBI will be a global computer "system of systems" to facilitate real-time management of combat information, AFRL said. It will allow military leaders to access the most current and accurate information to make quick decisions.

The OASIS demonstration-validation program, AFRL said, is intended to allow sustained operation in the face of known and future cyber attacks.